

Message Text

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ACTION AID-59

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FM AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5380

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

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COUNTRY TEAM MESSAGE

E.O.11652: N/A

TAGS: ECON KE

SUBJECT: DROUGHT CONDITIONS IN KENYA

REF: NAIROBI 0276

1. ACCUMULATED EFFECTS OF THE LAST TWO POOR RAINY SEASONS HAVE
WORSENE USUAL SEASONAL DRY CONDITIONS TO NEAR DISASTER
PROPORTIONS IN A NUMBER OF DISTRICTS IN KEMRA. SEVERAL AREAS
WERE CHECKED RECENTLY FOR ON-THE-SPOT OBSERVATIONS BY THE MISSION
DISASTER RELIEF OFFICER. TOTAL CROP FAILURE IN SUBSISTENCE
SECTOR EXIST IN MANY AREAS. ESTIMATE 15-30 PERCENT REDUCTION IN
YIELDS SOME AREAS IN BASIC FOOD COMMERCIAL SECTOR, PARTICULARLY
CORN. SMALL BUT GROWING POCKETS OF POPULATION NOW EXIST WHERE
LITTLE OR NO FOOD AVAILABLE. OTHER AREAS HAVE ADEQUATE SUPPLY
OF CORN AND BEANS IN LOCAL SHOPS FURNISHED FROM GOVERNMENT
CONTROLLED STOCKS. THIS MEANS LITTLE IN SUBSISTENCE AREAS
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WHERE PURCHASING POWER MINIMUM. DETERIORATING CONDITIONS WILL

CONTINUE UNTIL LONG RAINS COME IN SIX WEEKS TO TWO MONTHS.
ANOTHER SPELL OF POOR "LONG RAINS" COULD BRING MAJOR DISASTER.
HARDEST HIT PASTORALIST AREAS PARTICULARLY MASAI RESERVE.
THOUSANDS SQUARE MILES OF RANGELAND COMPLETELY DENUDED AND SEVERE
WATER SHORTAGE EXISTS. FRANTIC ATTEMPTS BY MASAI TO SELL
CATTLE TO NO AVAIL. KENYA MEAT COMMISSION (KMC) ONLY COMMERCIAL
OUTLET DAILY SLAUGHTER CAPACITY APPROXIMATELY 750 ANIMALS. KMC
BOOKED FOR FULL OPERATION ONE MONTH AHEAD. 18,000 CATTLE BOOKED
FROM ONE MASAI DISTRICT. REPRESENTS ONLY FRACTION OF ANIMALS
THAT COULD BE SOLD PRESENTLY FOR SLAUGHTER. EVEN IF NORMAL RAINS
COME ON SCHEDULE, ESTIMATED 150,000-200,000 CATTLE WILL PERISH
WITH NO MEANS SALVAGING MEAT VALUE.

2. VISIT TO SEMI-ARID UPPER NORTH EASTERN REGION BY USAID/REDSO
STAFF FAILED YIELD EVIDENCE OF NEAR DISASTER CONDITIONS, ALTHOUGH
RANGE LIVESTOCK CARRYING CAPACITY CLEARLY REDUCED BY POOR 1973
RAINS AND REPETITION POOR RAINFALL IN 1974 SEASON WOULD PROBABLY
PLACE REGION IN DISASTER CATEGORY.

3. APPARENTLY REQUESTS TO GOK FROM DISTRICTS TO SUPPLY FOOD TO
EMERGENCY AREAS HAVE MET MINIMAL RESPONSE MOSTLY IN FORM SEVERAL
HUNDRED BAGS CORN. NO SIGNS OF INFO AVAILABLE ON GOK MAKING MOVE
REQUEST OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE. CORN AND MARKETING BOARD OFFICIALS
FEEL CONFIDENT STOCKS ON HAND WILL CARRY THROUGH REMAINDER OF YEAR,
EVEN WITH WORSENING CONDITIONS. ADMIT WITHOUT GOOD ENSUING RAINY
SEASON, SERIOUS DIFFICULTY INEVITABLE. CORN EXPORTS TO NEIGHBORING
COUNTRIES BANNED. SURVEILLANCE CONDITIONS TO CONTINUE. DECONT 2/1/75.
MARSHALL

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